

With the Complts of Med. Officer.



HEALTH OF BIDEFORD.

. ANNUAL REPORT .

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

for

. . 1910. . .

BIDEFORD :

COLES & LEE, Printers, Stationers, &c., Grenville Street.

1870

. . TO THE . .
Bideford Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have herewith the privilege of presenting my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1910.

Although the favourableness of the vital statistics is not quite up to those of the year 1909, the difference is small, and still gives evidence of the healthy condition of the Borough, which I would point out will contrast favourably with any town and district of its size.

With continued watchfulness on the part of your officials, I am convinced the result of improved sanitation will be more evident.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

Bideford,

January, 1911.

M. RD. GOODING,

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF BIDEFORD.

1910.

Annual Report.

Area, 3196 Statute Acres.

Population in 1881—6499

„ 1891—7831

„ 1901—8732

Estimated to Middle of 1910—9550

Inhabited Houses, 1901 census	...	...	...	...	1843
Average Number of Persons per House	...	...	...	...	4·7
Tenements of not less than 5 rooms...	...	...	...	...	484
Density of Population per acre	...	...	...	...	2·7

Births Registered—Males, 109 ; Females 85	...	...	Total, 194
Deaths Registered—Males, 66 ; Females, 56	...	...	„ 122
Birth Rate per 1000 of Population	...	...	20·3
Death Rate per 1000 of Population	...	...	12·77
Ditto, Excluding Non-Residents	...	...	11·83
Infantile Mortality (22 deaths under 1 year)	}	...	...
Death Rate per 1000 Births			
Zymotic or Chief Epidemic Mortality (5 deaths)	}	...	...
Death Rate per 1000 of Population			
Tuberculosis Death Rate per 1000	...	...	1·78

Physical Features.

The town slopes upwards from the banks of the River Torridge, which is in great part a tidal river. A very large volume of sea water is carried by the tide to about 3 miles above the town.

The sub-soil, on which the town is built, consists mostly of "shale" with occasional desposits of clay.

The general condition of the population is fairly prosperous. Unemployment, especially in winter, to a certain extent affects the well-being of the poorer inhabitants. This to a certain degree is limited, by the fact that the female portion of the community find employment in the Collar Factories. And this is a factor in determining the continued high rate of infantile mortality.

Chief Industries.

Collar Factories (3); workshops for the manufacture of clothing, &c.; carriage building, and to some extent, agriculture and shipping trade.

House Accommodation.

During the past year twenty-nine additional houses have been built, eleven of which contain more than six rooms. Plans for new buildings are, through the Surveyor, submitted for approval to the Urban District Council. The Sanitary Inspector tests the drains and plumbing of all such before occupation.

I fully recognise the increased power with which your Board is invested by the Towns Planning Act (1909), and although in all cases in which the more obvious defects opposed to sanitation exists measures are immediately taken to remedy these, yet there are many instances, especially in blocks of small houses of the older type, where "sufficiency of open space about houses" is conspicuous by its absence.

In consequence of the lack of cottage accommodation for the better housing of the working classes it is impossible to deal too drastically with these examples.

Every possible advantage will be taken of the powers of the New Act during the coming year.

There has been no instance of closure of houses during the year as being unfit for human habitation.

Overcrowding occurred in two instances, and on notice having been served this was remedied.

Water Supply.

The Water Supply is derived from springs in part, but chiefly consists of "Upland Water." The supply to the town has been more satisfactory than that of the past year, and "intermittence" has been to a less extent. At the upper part of the town where complaints have arisen it has been found that the delivery pipes will have to be increased in size. Your Board has not yet quite solved the question of a more permanent reserve supply, but I am in a position to state that steps are being taken by your Board with this view, and that the augmentation will probably be an accomplished fact during the current year.

The quality of the water has been good throughout the year.

Rainfall for the Year 1910.

January ...	...	...	3.72 inches
February ...	...	...	5.60 do.
March ...	...	...	.45 do.
April ...	...	...	2.28 do.
May ...	...	...	2.06 do.
June ...	...	...	2.80 do.
July ...	...	...	3.23 do.
August ...	...	...	4.12 do.
September ...	...	...	.17 do.
October ...	...	...	5.50 do.
November ...	...	...	6.00 do.
December ...	...	...	6.48 do.
Total ...			42.41 inches

Rain fell on 210 days, 91 days being less than one-tenth ins.

The greatest fall was on October 11th, viz., 1.8 inches. On 18 days the fall exceeded half inch.

Milk Supply.

The quality of the milk distributed has been good. Fourteen samples have been analysed, and all found of good quality.

There are 13 dairies and 1 milk shop, and 7 purveyors of milk from outside the Borough.

The dairies and milkshops are periodically inspected and also the cow-sheds. The conditions have been satisfactory.

There is no inspection by Veterinary Surgeons of cows of dairymen for detecting tuberculosis.

Food and Drugs Act.

No action under the above has been found necessary. No carcases or meat or fish found unfit for human consumption during the year, and no animal or carcase the subject of tuberculosis.

The Sanitary Inspector acts as Meat Inspector.

Sanitary Conditions.

The sewerage of the town is in fairly good condition, any defects found are remedied, and any private drains with faulty construction made good. The method of disposal of the sewerage is by "Water Carriage" System, and conducted in the tidal river Torridge.

House Refuse

Has been systematically removed by the Sanitary Authority and taken to "tips." The scavenging of the streets has been satisfactorily carried out.

A few isolated cases of infectious disease have from time to time occurred, but no epidemic of the more serious forms of infectious disease has occurred. Towards the end of the year epidemics of chicken pox and mumps of a mild type have been rife, chiefly amongst the juvenile population, the latter also attacking a few adults.

The Infectious Diseases Hospital.

The use of this Isolation Hospital has not been required for the past year. Provision is made for nine patients, and except in the case of children of tender age only one disease could be admitted at the same time.

The methods of disinfection are: Boiling, Sulphurous and Formalin Vapours.

SUMMARY

OF THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

The Inspector says he has given much attention to house inspection during the year. That he has made 570 visits in search of defects, and where any have been found he

has caused these to be remedied. Many new drains have been made to replace old ones gully traps, &c.—and gradually a better condition of yard covering is being carried out. Instead of "pitching" with stone, he is advocating concrete cement for courts and yards.

He has tested 42 old drains, found many defective, these have been re-laid and re-tested.

All new drains to new buildings, soil and ventilating pipes, &c., are tested by smoke before being occupied. All drains passing under houses, of the older type, when renewed, are now laid in and covered by concrete.

Cleansing of Houses and Serving of Notices.

Twenty-two instances of renovating and lime-washing of houses are given, and disinfection of rooms, where infectious disease has occurred, including that of tuberculosis. In addition to the above eleven notices of nuisances existing have been served, and the nuisances abated. Only one gave trouble; a prosecution was instituted, when the matter was satisfactorily arranged.

Slaughter Houses.

The Public Abattoir and the six private slaughter houses have been frequently visited, and also at the times of slaughtering. As a rule these are well kept. A little pressure has occasionally to be made to effect cleaning-up after slaughtering.

Bakehouses.

There are 12 in the Borough—all periodically inspected. In one instance only has attention to be drawn to the need of lime washing.

Meat and Fish Markets and Shops.

These have been regularly inspected and supervised.

Elementary Public Schools and Lavatories.

These Schools are periodically inspected and found to be kept clean, and the sanitary arrangements good.

Factories and Workshops Act (1901).

Factories, workshops and work-places have been from time to time inspected. The Sani-

tary arrangements that are controlled by the District Council have been satisfactory. No notices have been served. The 22nd Section of the Public Health (Amendment) Acts 1890, is in force in the district.

I have to state in connection with my remarks in 1909 Annual Report, that the Factories and some Workshops have supplied lists of outworkers during the past year, and I have no doubt that these lists will be continued to be sent regularly, as required by the Act.

Medical Inspection of School Children.

The Medical Inspection is proceeding, as far as I am aware, satisfactorily, the supervising authority being the Devon County Council, with a special Medical Inspector. Towards the latter part of the year many notifications of absence from school in consequence of chicken pox and mumps were sent to me, and I believe the Provided Schools or some one or more, closed a few days before the usual holiday season.

Midwives' Act.

The Act continues to work well. I have had no complaints of unregistered women having acted as Midwives since 1st April, 1910.

The notification of Births Act, 1907, has not been adopted in the Borough, and no Health Visitor appointed.



COMMENTS ON TABULATED STATISTICS.



Birth Rate.

There is a marked decrease in the birth rate, the lowest rate recorded for 10 years. The rate for 1910 being 20.3 per 1,000, and that for 1909, 21.5.

Death Rate.

The deaths are 15 more than 1909 and the rate 12.7 as against 11.3 per 1,000. Better results might have been expected, but these small fluctuations will from time to time arise.

Infantile Mortality.

The deaths for this year are 22, 5 more than those of 1909, and gives a rate of 113.4 as compared with 83.3 per 1,000 births.

Many of these infants have died from inanition and premature birth. I am of opinion much of this is caused by mothers having to work, especially during the latter months of pregnancy, at Factories.

Zymotic Death Rate

Is only slightly higher than that of 1909, viz., .52, as compared with .42 per 1,000. In connection with the Infectious Diseases I desire and I believe it to be my duty to sound a note of warning in respect to the very large decrease in the number of vaccinations against small pox which has been taking place in this district for the past four years. In Bideford district alone there are some 300 fewer vaccinations than those for the preceding four years ending 1906.

I fear that the conscientious objector is laying the train for an extensive epidemic at no distant date. The argument that improved sanitation will be sufficient protection is not good enough, although such improvement will certainly assist. I would suggest to the believers in that argument. To what extent has improved sanitation abolished scarlet fever? This infectious disease is almost as rife throughout the country as it ever has been. There were 94 exemptions.

Tuberculosis.

This disease has been responsible for 17 deaths, an increase of 5 on the year 1909, the death rate being 1.8 per 1,000. So much has been said during the past year in connection with Tuberculosis that I will content myself with referring to my remarks on the subject in the Annual Report for 1909.

I have received two notifications for the year. There is no provision made either in the Hospital or Union Infirmary for isolating such cases.

In every case where death is known to have occurred from tubercle, the room formerly occupied by the patient is disinfected by the Sanitary Inspector. In most instances this information is conveyed only by the Registrar of Deaths weekly returns.

TABLE I.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1910 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public In- stitutions in the District	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
		Number.	Rate.*	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages				Number.	Rate.*
				Number.	Rate per 1000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate.*				
I	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	13
1900	8915	234	26.1	26	111.1	147	16.4	28	18	129	14.3
1901	8754	210	23.9	29	138.0	131	14.9	13	6	125	14.2
1902	8850	222	25.08	31	139.6	151	17.06	15	10	141	15.9
1903	8947	221	24.7	22	99.5	131	14.64	22	14	117	13.0
1904	9046	214	23.65	23	107.5	143	15.8	22	7	136	15.03
1905	9140	206	22.54	27	131.0	131	14.34	22	10	121	13.3
1906	9200	191	20.7	26	136.1	129	14.0	15	6	123	13.37
1907	9300	196	21.07	20	102.0	124	13.33	23	8	116	12.47
1908	9375	200	21.33	20	100.0	129	13.76	28	18	111	11.84
1909	9465	204	21.55	17	83.3	107	11.3	12	7	100	10.56
Averages for years 1900-1909.	9099	209	23.0	24	114.8	132	14.5	20	10	121	13.3
1910	9550	194	20.3	22	113.4	122	12.77	22	9	113	11.83

(*) Rates in Columns 4 and 8, and 13 calculated per 1000 of estimated population.

TABLE III.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1910.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.					
	At all Ages.	At all Ages—Years.				
		1 to 5.	5 to 15.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards	
Diphtheria	4	1	2	1		
Erysipelas	3			2	1	
Scarlet Fever	1		1			
Enteric Fever	1		1			
Puerperal Fever	1			1		
Totals	10	1	4	4	1	

TABLE IV.
CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1910.

Causes of Death.	Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.							Deaths in or belonging to localities (at all ages.).		Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.
	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	Hospital.	Union Work-house.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	12	16
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup) ...	2		1	1						
Diarrhœa	3	3								
Phthisis	11					11				
Other tuberculous diseases	6	4		1		1				
Cancer, malignant disease	11					6	5	1	1	3
Bronchitis	13	2	1			4	6	1		1
Pneumonia	8	3	1	1		3				1
Pleurisy	1						1			
Premature Birth ...	5	5								
Diseases & Accidents of parturition	3	1				2		1		1
Heart Diseases	14					4	10		3	4
Accidents	8			1	1	5	1	2		4
Rickets	1	1								
All other causes ...	36	3		2	1	9	21	2	2	8
All Causes	122	22	3	6	2	45	44	7	6	22

TABLE V.
INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1910.
Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-2 Months.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	5-6 Months.	7-8 Months.	9-10 Months.	11-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 Year.
Diarrhœa, all forms					1		1				1		
Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh							1	1					
Premature Birth	3	2											
Congenital Defects	1												
Injury at Birth	1												
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus						1							
Tuberculous Meningitis					1	2	1						
Rickets										1			
Bronchitis										1			
Pneumonia			1						1			1	
Total	5	2	1	8	2	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	22

Births in the year—Legitimate, 182 ; Illegitimate, 12.
Deaths in the year—Legitimate Infants, 18 ; Illegitimate infants, 4.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901.

1.—Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.)

	Inspections	Written Notices.	Prose- cutions.
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	12	nil	nil
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	130	nil	nil
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' Premises)			
Total	142	nil	nil

2.—Defects found in Factories, Workshops and Workplaces, under the Public Healths Act :—One, want of drainage of floors, found and remedied. Offences under the Factory and Workshop Act :—One, breach of special sanitary requirements for bakehouses, remedied.

3.—Home Work.—Lists have been supplied during the past year in accordance with the Act, and inspection of premises made from time to time, and Notices of Outworkers residing in other districts sent to the officials interested.

4.—Total number of Workshops on Register—67.